

PROJECT INTERCONNECT ~ the Learning Network of Minnesota in Metro Minneapolis & St. Paul
7817 Noble Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

December 27, 2000

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Re: Project Interconnect (Billed entity 149471) Form 471 Application Numbers
203049
CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21

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DEC 29 2000

Letter of Appeal
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, S.W.
Room TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Sir:

Project Interconnects Form 471 application for the year July 1, 2000-June 30, 2001 was rejected.. An appeal was filed in April 2000. I am appealing that rejection and request that the Schools and Libraries Division reconsider its decision. This is in reference to CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21 as stated in the attached letter from Kate L. Moore, President, Schools and Libraries Division.

Project Interconnect is a consortium of kindergarten through grade 12 school districts in metropolitan Minneapolis and St. Paul. Financial support for telecommunication access for participating schools and libraries was partially funded by the Minnesota Legislature through a grant process. A very significant amount from E-rate discounts enabled us to leverage local support and expand coverage to include more capacity.

Project Interconnect is providing telecommunications opportunities for the learning community in the seven county metropolitan Minneapolis and St. Paul area. We would have difficulty continuing without the help that E-rate discounts provide. We are dependent upon E-rate discounts in providing telecommunications services for distance learning and Internet.

We feel that the denial is completely unwarranted and unfair. We have complied with all the necessary documentation requested. We provide Letters of Agency when none was asked or required. We feel that we met or exceeded all timelines set by SLD. Our file was lost by SLD personnel, which delayed any decision on our application for several weeks. There are no issues with the eligibility of services contained in our application for year two or for the discounts requested. Project Interconnect was granted E-rate discounts for Year 1 without providing letters of agency.

To deny discounts or funds on the basis of one school stating that it didn't know about our application is unfair to all the other members of Project Interconnect. All school districts in our consortium were communicated with by the Minnesota Department of Education (a.k.a. The Department of Children, Families and Learning) requiring Project Interconnect to apply and receive funds or discounts (we have been paying their bills for two years) on their behalf.

Officials of Project Interconnect and the Minnesota Department of Education are willing to meet with anyone you designate to further explain or provide clarity to this matter. Please let us know.

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We ask for your expeditious consideration of this matter. Denial of these funds impacts our ability to deliver educational services to the children in metropolitan Minneapolis/St. Paul
We hope that the above explanation and the supporting documentation are helpful in clearing up this matter and approve Project Interconnects Year Three application.

If there are any questions or if additional information is needed please feel free to contact me by telephone, (612) 585-1954 or e-mail me at: leto@projectinterconnect.org or leto@unique-software.com.

Your reconsideration in this matter is appreciated.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William R. Leto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a stylized "L".

William R. Leto
Coordinator,
Project Interconnect

Box 125 – Correspondence Unit
80 South Jefferson Road
Whippany, NJ 07981

Date: November 28, 2000

Contact Person: Mr. William R. Leto
Organization: Project Interconnect
Address: 7817 Noble Ave. N.
City, State ZIP: Brooklyn Park, MN 55433

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Funding Commitment Decision Letter

Re: Form 471 Application Number: 203049
Funding Year: 2000-2001
Billed Entity Number: 149471

Dear Applicant:

We have completed our review of your FCC Form 471, Services Ordered and Certification Form, and have determined that you do not qualify for funding under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules governing the Universal Service Support Mechanism for Schools and Libraries.

After carefully reviewing the information that you provided to the fund administrator, we reached our decision based on our finding that when you filed your FCC Form 471, you did not have permission to act on behalf of all of the entities that you listed on your consortium application. This determination was made because at least one member of your consortium was unaware of the application that you submitted, and you were unable to provide us with a Letter of Agency from that entity. On the FCC Form 471, applicants must certify that they are authorized to submit an application on behalf of each entity listed on the application. In this case, since you are unable to support your certification, your application must be denied in full.

If you feel further examination of your application is in order, you may file an appeal with the SLD at the address above, or with the Federal Communications Commission. To file with the FCC, address your correspondence to the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room TW-A325, Washington, DC 20554. Please reference CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21 on the first page of your appeal. Before preparing and submitting your appeal, please be sure to review the FCC rules concerning the filing of an Administrator's Decision, which are posted on the SLD web site at www.sl.universalservice.org.

You must file your appeal with either the SLD or the FCC no later than 30 days from the date of this letter, in order for your appeal to be filed in a timely fashion.

We look forward to continuing our work with you on connecting our schools and libraries together through communications.

Sincerely,
Kate L. Moore
President, Schools and Libraries Division

cc:

Technology and Information Educational Services
1925 W. County Rd. B-2
Roseville, Minnesota 55113
Attn: Mr. Lee E. Whitcraft

U S West Communications, Inc.
1600 7th Ave. 6th Floor
Seattle, Washington 98101
Attn: Ms Teresa Turner

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